

of the national economy each year. That is over \$1 trillion a year. For every \$1 billion spent on highways, 42,000 jobs are created. These quality jobs range from highway construction to construction service and supply to retail businesses. The condition of the transportation infrastructure in our communities has an enormous impact on whether businesses decide to locate in that area, what products are available and job creation.

Inadequate roads cost businesses and motorists thousands of dollars each year. In the Nation's 25 largest urban areas, traffic congestion costs motorists a staggering \$43 billion annually. Moreover, driving on substandard roads costs Americans an additional \$21.5 billion annually in extra vehicle costs, including wasted fuel, excess tire wear, and extra maintenance and repairs. In short, areas with strong transportation networks tend to be growing areas; places with neglected and decaying infrastructure tend to be places that businesses and people are leaving.

That is why it is so important to keep our national transportation network strong as we approach the 21st century. This is why the Federal Government must play a major role in transportation. Neither the States nor the private sector alone can produce the efficient system of infrastructure that assures the efficient movement of goods, services, and people.

Given the importance of transportation to our economy, Congress must challenge itself to find ways of increasing the amount of Federal resources available for transportation infrastructure improvements, even at a time when the need to balance our budget is so critical. As the only Republican from Texas who serves on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I am committed to making funding formula fair for all States.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1053

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of the bill H.R. 1053.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

HEALTH INSURANCE FOR THE NATION'S CHILDREN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. OLVER].

AN ISSUE RELATIVE TO H.R. 1469

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I am very grateful to the gentleman from New

Jersey for allowing me to finish the statement that I was doing earlier under his time.

As I was saying, under the section 601 of the bill, H.R. 1469, the emergency appropriation bill which we will deal with tomorrow, there is a change in the law proposed and promoted by my predecessor Silvio O. Conte which would allow the American currency to be made by a joint partnership that had up to 50 percent foreign ownership, rather than the original law, as it was, that would allow only 10 percent ownership.

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The reason for that is that it would allow joint ventures with foreign national currency paper suppliers. The provision in section 601 has been specifically designed to give the currency production for our American currency over to the most likely foreign player, Thomas De La Rue, the British currency maker. De La Rue is more than a billion dollar a year business that has a monopoly on the supply of currency paper to the British Government. By policy of the British Government, no American company nor even another British company is allowed to bid and compete on the British currency paper contracts.

A capitalization subsidy to such a new supplier is particularly unfair because it is a foreign manufacturer who has a monopoly in their own market. It is actually unfair for any new supplier where there is already a willing supplier, and it is certainly outside our present procurement law. It is especially unfair when it is being given to a very large company, a goliath of paper companies.

These are American taxpayer dollars we are talking about for these capitalization subsidy payments, and it is hardly the way to use our taxpayer dollars when we are trying to balance the budget.

In a final irony, we tomorrow will vote on a so-called Buy American amendment which is offered by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. TRAFICANT]. All of us will vote for that amendment, and then in very short order we will be asked to use American taxpayer dollars to subsidize turning over the manufacture of the American currency to the monopoly in their own market British currency maker.

American taxpayers deserve better than to be asked to pay for massive capitalization subsidies for foreign companies to make our currency, and I hope that tomorrow we will not adopt section 601 of H.R. 1469 when the matter comes up before us.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, at this point what I would like to do is to move into the issue of kids' or children's health care. Before I do that, I just wanted to say that Democrats in general have been concerned for almost 2 years now, and have put forth as part of their families first agenda an effort and a program to try to cover the 10

million children in these United States that do not have health insurance coverage at this point.

We have been very upset, I would say, over the fact that the Republican leadership really has not made an effort to address the concern of children's health care. In fact, over the last 2 weeks what we have seen sort of on the opposite end is an effort to cut money for the Women, Infants and Children's Program, the WIC Program, which hopefully will be addressed tomorrow when the supplemental appropriation bill comes up but still has not been adequately addressed by the Republican leadership.

Just by way of background, last month the Republicans on the Committee on Appropriations, largely along party lines, voted to limit the funding for the WIC Program. For those who do not know, the program provides milk, formula, and other nutritional benefits for our Nation's children. It is short about \$76 million for this fiscal year. Most of the request, actually, for this funding to make up for the cut, most of the request came from the Governors of our 50 States, many of whom, the majority of whom actually are Republican.

Today when the supplemental appropriations bill came up on the floor to be debated for the first time and the rule was being considered, we saw the Republican leadership essentially playing a shell game with the fate of approximately 180,000 children who need the WIC Program and are not going to be funded if we do not get this additional money. What the Republican leadership did, basically, was to tie additional funding to WIC to this controversial rule and effectively gag all debate on any further amendments to meet these Governors' requests for additional WIC funding.

I cannot emphasize enough how important this WIC Program is. There are certain States like Nebraska and Arizona who have already begun to cut off nutritional assistance to many children because they are not getting this money that is needed. Believe me, more States are going to be following suit very soon if we do not have some action on the WIC Program.

I think it is important because, again, WIC is a priority. The Republican leadership has not made it a priority any more than they have made the issue of children's health care a priority. Many of us in our Democratic task force on children's health care have been complaining now for several months about the fact that the Republicans have not addressed this issue.

Last summer, Democrats began beating sort of a drum on the need to provide assistance to working families with uninsured children. This is primarily a concern of working families, because if they are of very low income, then they are eligible for Medicaid for their children. But if they are not, if they are above the Medicaid threshold, and in that case most of the people are